

## Message Text

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ACTION H-03

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INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA  
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SAN SALVADOR 00230

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: ELAB, SHUM, PINT, ES  
SUBJECT: CONGRESSMAN DRINAN'S MEETING WITH LABOR REPRESENTATIVES

REF: 77 SAN SALVADOR 5234

SUMMARY. CONGRESSMAN DRINAN MET WITH APPROXIMATELY TWENTY UNION REPRESENTATIVES. THE LEADERS OF THE COMMUNIST LABOR UNIONS DID MOST OF THE TALKING AND THERE WAS NO DISPUTE, EVEN AMONG THE UNIONS WITH CLOSE TIES TO THE GOES, OF THEIR CONTENTION THAT TRADE UNION RIGHTS DO NOT EXIST IN EL SALVADOR AND THAT WORKERS' RIGHTS HAVE NOT BEEN PROTECTED BY THE MINISTRY OF LABOR AND LABOR JUDGES. NO UNION REPRESENTATIVE WAS ABLE TO PRESENT DRINAN WITH THE NAMES OF ANY UNION MEMBERS WHO ARE PRESENTLY IMPRISONED BY THE ROMERO GOVERNMENT FOR UNION ACTIVITIES, ALTHOUGH MOST SUPPORTED THE CONTENTION THAT HARASSMENT OF UNION MEMBERS CONTINUES. THE EAGLE INTERNATIONAL CASE WAS REFERRED TO SEVERAL TIMES DURING THE MEETING. END SUMMARY.

1. CONGRESSMAN ROBERT DRINAN MET ON JANUARY 11 IN THE ARCHBISHOPRIC OF SAN SALVADOR WITH APPROXIMATELY TWENTY MEMBERS OF THE EL SALVADORAN LABOR MOVEMENT. JOHN MCAWARD, AN OFFICIAL OF THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST SERVICE COMMITTEE; DR. THOMAS ANDERSON, AUTHOR-JOURNALIST WHO HAS PUBLISHED WORKS ON EL SALVADOR; AND LABOR OFFICER ALSO ATTENDED. THE  
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COMMUNIST LABOR UNIONS WERE REPRESENTED BY MAXIMINO JAIMES, SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE FEDERACION UNITARIA SINDICALISTA DE EL SALVADOR (FUSS), AND PEDRO ANTONIO CARCAMO RECINOS, SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE FEDERATION OF FOOD, CLOTHING, TEXTILE AND ASSOCIATED WORKERS UNIONS (FESTIAVTSCE), THEY WERE THE CHIEF LABOR LEADERS PRESENT AND THEY DID MOST OF THE TALKING. REPRESENTATIVES, BUT NOT THE LEADERS, OF THE

CGS (CONFEDERACION GENERAL DE SINDICATOS, A UNION WITH CLOSE TIES TO THE GOVERNMENT), FESINCONSTRANS (FEDERATION OF CONSTRUCTION AND TRANSPORT UNIONS), FENASTRAS (A LEFTIST LABOR UNION THAT HAS INCREASINGLY COOPERATED WITH FUSS AND FESTIAVTCES), STIUSA (TEXTILE WORKERS' UNION WITHIN FENASTRAS) AND OTHER UNIONS WERE ALSO PRESENT.

2. NO REPRESENTATIVE OF THE MEETING DISPUTED JAIMES' AND CARCAMO'S CONTENTION THAT TRADE UNION RIGHTS DO NOT REALLY EXIST IN EL SALVADOR AND THT WORKERS' RIGHTS HAVE NOT BEEN PROTECTED BY THE MINISTRY OF LABOR AND THE LABOR JUDGES. HOWEVER, NO ONE COULD PRESENT DRINAN WITH THE NAMES OF ANY UNION MEMBERS WHO ARE PRESENTLY IMPRISONED BY THE ROMERO GOVERNMENT FOR UNION ACTIVITIES, ALTHOUGH MOST SUPPORTED THE CONTENTION THAT HARASSMENT OF UNION MEMBERS CONTINUES.

3. JAIMES DID PRESENT ONE WORKER, MANUEL JESUS LOPEZ CASTILLO OF SANTA ANA, WHO HAD ALLEGEDLY BEEN TORTURED FOR UNION ACTIVITIES. LOPEZ, WHO APPARENTLY BELONGS TO A CONSTRUCTION WORKERS' UNION, SAID HE HAD BEEN ARRESTED IN SEPTEMBER 1977 BY MEN DRESSED IN CIVILIAN CLOTHES AND TAKN TO THE POLICE STATION IN SANTA ANA WHERE HE HAS DETAINED FOR FIFTEEN DAYS. HE SAID AT ONE TIME HE HAD BEEN KEPT TIED UP FOR 24 HOURS, DURING WHICH HE HAD BEEN BEATEN AND KICKED BY THE POLICE. HE SHOWED CONGRESSMAN DRINAN SCARS ON HIS WRISTS FROM HAVING

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BEEN ALLEGEDLY TIED UP.

4. MARGARITO ANTONIO GODOY, SPEAKING FOR FESINCONSTRANS AT THE MEETING, STATED THAT QTE UNITED STATES SENTATE (I.E., CONGRESS) MUST INTERVENE THROUGHOUT LATIN AMERICAN TO IMPLEMENT UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS UNQTE AND THAT QTE THERE IS NOT A FREE LABOR MOVEMENT UNQTE IN EL SALVADOR, WITH XVL TINATIONALS INVOLVED IN THE SUPPRESSION OF UNION RIGHTS.

5. JAIMES MADE SPECIFIC REFERENCE TO THE EAGLE INTERNATIONAL CASE (SEE REFTEL) AND REPRESENTATIVES OF WORKERS AT PLANT ATTEMPTED TO GIVE THEIR SIDE OF THE STORY. MCAWARD TOLD THEM THAT THERE WAS NOT ENOUGH TIME TO HEAR THEIR CASE AND AKSED THEM TO MEET WITH LABOR OFFICER LATER ON TO DISCUSS THEIR SITUATION. (LABOR OFFICER MET WITH GROUP ON JANUARY 13 AND CONTENTS OF MEETING WILL BE SET FORTH IN SEPTTEL.)

6. AT THE END OF THE MEETING, DRINAN TOLD THE ASSEMBLED REPRESENTATIVES THAT HE HIMSELF HAD ONCE BEEN A LABOR ORGANIZER AND THAT WHAT HE CALLED THE CURTAILMENT OF UNION RIGHTS BY THE GOES WAS QTE A BASIC VIOLATION OF INTER-

NATIONALLY RECOGNIZED LEGAL RIGHTS AND THAT WE IN THE CONGRESS WILL TAKE THIS INTO CONSIDERATION WHEN WE PASS ON LEGISLATION ON EL SALVADOR UNQTE. HE ALSO SAID THAT THE UNITED AUTO WORKERS UNION WAS ESPECIALLY INTERESTED IN ENFORCING HUMAN RIGHTS AND WERE READY TO GIVE SEVERAL MILLION DOLLARS TO FOREIGN COUNTRIES TO SUPPORT UNION RIGHTS. (DRINAN SAID LATER HE WAS GOING TO BE IN TOUCH WITH UAW RE EL SALVADOR).

7. COMMENT. WHILE STATEMENTS OF JAIMES AND CARCAMO MUST BE SEEN IN LIGHT OF THEIR INVOLVEMENT WITH THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF EL SALVADOR, FESINCONSTANS' STATEMENTS CANNOT BE SO CONSTRUED AS THE LATTER FEDERATION IS CONSIDERED TO BE THE STRONGEST AMONG THE DEMOCRATIC LABOR FEDERATIONS IN EL SALVADOR. CONFIDENTIAL

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FELIPE ZALDIVAR, SECRETARY-GENERAL OF FESINCONSTANS, IS CONSIDERED STRONGEST LABOR LEADER IN EL SALVADOR AND WAS ONE OF TWO EL SALVADORAN LABOR LEADERS WHO ATTENDED THE AFL-CIO CONVENTION LAST DECEMBER. ACCORDING TO HIS ASSOCIATES, HE DID NOT ATTEND THE MEETING WITH DRINAN DUE TO PREVIOUS COMMITMENTS.

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